

We're Not Broken (Just Bent)

by LaceyBird

Category: Our Girl

Genre: Friendship, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Captain James, Molly Dawes, Smurf

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-04-10 22:53:38

Updated: 2016-04-10 22:53:38

Packaged: 2016-04-27 20:17:56

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,647

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: "I want things to be different," he says, a whispered confession, his breath flowing over her lips and into her mouth. He doesn't say any more than that, but he doesn't have to. Please read and review.

We're Not Broken (Just Bent)

****AN:** So, I don't really know what this is; a little bit of Dawes/Smurf friendship, a little bit of Dawes/James angst. A whole lot of rambling. ******

****Set** during E4, right after Dawes accepts Smurf's ring, but you'll probably guess that. ******

****Please read and review.** It's been a while, so I'm a little rusty, but this just wouldn't leave me alone!******

****Lacey.****

* * *

><p>We're not broken

****(Just bent)****

"Cup of tea?" Smurf asks into her shoulder, quietly, the low rumble of his hushed voice vibrating through his body, accompanied by the indiscreet grumble of his stomach. "I'm buying."

Considering he's just given her his Mother's engagement ring, and he's currently holding her in his arms, the invitation feels incredibly date-like, and something stirs in the pit of Molly's already unsettled stomach. She pulls out of the embrace, the comfort of his warm body retreating and leaving her feeling oddly chilled, despite the stagnant temperatures in the Greater Middle Eastern

country. She swipes at damp cheeks, removing the residue of the tears that had spilled over her waterline, and only half forces the corners of her mouth to pull up into a small smile.

"Do you use that line on all the girls?" she jokes, a feeble attempt at distracting from the fact she's just spent the better part of half an hour crying on his shoulder.

"Only the best ones," he says, shrugging one shoulder casually as he plays along. She's hesitant, though, because despite the easy going exterior and theatrical show of getting to his feet and offering his hand, she sees it there; the desire, the longing for the invitation to mean something more than it does, the suppression. She'd know, because it's deep within her, too. The reluctance must show in her face, because he sighs, dramatically rolling his eyes. "C'mon, Mols. I'm just looking out for a mate."

The weight of the ring presses into her palm, leaving its imprint, and she's already a little apprehensive of the implications it will bring for them. Her grip tightens on the band; gaze drops to her clenched fist.

"Smurfâ€¦"

"Look, I know you've got some shit going on with you," he interrupts, the offered hand swaying through the air as he talks. "Whatever it is, you know you can tell me, right?"

Molly's breath catches in her throat, and her eyes prickle again as she considers sodding the consequences and telling him how she's fallen for their boss, how he's married and has kids (how many, she doesn't know), how it feels like an anvil has dropped on her chest and is slowly crushing her. But then she looks back up at him, standing by her bedside, and instead she swallows, hard.

"It's nothing."

"Is it because of the Boss-man?" he probes, anyway, and there's a stab of panic at the insinuation that Captain James is to blame for her breakdown. "Mansfield saw you both earlier; said you were arguing about something."

"No, it's not." She doesn't give him any more than that, because she just can't.

"He's our Captain, Mols. It's his job to ride our arses."

"I know," she says, looking at him pointedly. "It ain't him, alright?"

Smurf looks as uncomfortable as she feels, and she's unsure if it's because he knows she's being dishonest, or if it's because he knows the truth is something he doesn't want to hear, despite the offer. She clears her throat, an attempt to clear the air, and gets to her feet.

"Okay," he says, taking her movement as his cue to move forwards, to drop the subject. He tilts his head back a little, looking at her through lowered lashes and he's back to looking like the arrogant squaddie she'd first met in Guildford. "Well, come on then, Sunshine,

let's hit up Costa Ñ; la Bastion. But we need to stop off for food on the way; I'm fucking starving."

She feels a smile behind her lips. "I could eat some pizza," she says, and he grins.

She grabs her gun, and they go.

OG

They've barely stepped out into the heat of the mid-afternoon sun when her stomach begins to cramp a little, grumbling noisily, and she can't recall when she'd last managed to eat something. (The Alpen bar for breakfast doesn't count.)

As they walk, Smurf attempts to keep his attention focused on everything but her, but she can feel it when he fails, when his eyes slide to his left and gaze lands on her. She keeps her eyes trained forwards, squinting against the brilliance of the sun's light, and the grit and dust that's kicked up by other personnel's marching boots or the large tyres of passing military vehicles.

"Reckon you'll hang around after this?" he eventually asks her.

"I dunno," she says, because she doesn't. She hasn't really thought about it. "I might." Or she might not.

"I'm getting out," he says in a cocksure way that makes Molly believe he's got it all worked out.

"Really?"

"Yep," he nods. "I'm going for it; wife; kids; dog. Would suit me down to the ground."

"Yeah, 'cause you seem the domesticated type," she jokes, eyes falling to the large rifle slung over Smurf's shoulder, and back to his face again.

"I am," he insists, with only the slightest hint of humour. "Unlike you."

She grins at him, nodding.

"I'd like a nice little place in the Valleyâ€|"

She steals glances at him as he talks, his words and enthusiasm coming together to paint her a picture of the life he's imagining. His hair ruffles in the faint, warm breeze, and she finds herself drawn to the smooth outline of his nose, repeatedly tracing the straight edge. He has the distinctive good looks of a man that will age well, with his chiselled cheekbones and angular jaw, and as her gaze works over his profile, there's a small tug in her chest at the realisation that he's inadvertently describing the life they'd joked about sharing during R&R.

His eyes sparkle in the afternoon sunlight when he looks at her, and his lips pull into an easy smile as he chats away, but there's a loneliness etched deep within his irises that she catches only when she pays close enough attention, and she imagines that the sudden

death of his twin is responsible.

Even so, they're both soldiers serving together in the same war that had claimed Garrant's life, and there's a serenity in the shared experience that seems to be taming his inner demons.

She takes the ring from her pocket and slips it onto her finger. If he notices, he doesn't say anything.

OG

Though it's late afternoon, and the camp is bustling with thousands of servicemen and women, both the coffee shop and the pizzeria are quiet. There's a short queue for the food, but nobody seems to be hanging around to eat, and Molly can only assume it's because the sun is relentless and the seating options are limited. They chose a table in the far corner of the Costa coffee shop, taking their pizza slices with them, and she sits with her back to the windows so she can at least pretend she's sitting in the Costa she and Proud Mary often frequented on many of the mornings-after-the-night-before.

Smurf throws her an amused smirk as she eyes the freshly iced cakes displayed on the stand by the tills, and then lifts his eyebrows as she proceeds to pour six sachets of sugar into her freshly brewed Clipper tea.

"Bloody Hell, Mols. Aren't you sweet enough?"

She smiles, faintly, and shrugs a shoulder. "It gives me energy."

"It'll give you diabetes," he says, watching as she stirs the steaming liquid with one hand, and picks a slice of pepperoni from her pizza and pops it into her mouth with the other. "Then you'll get fat and have bad breath."

She shakes her head, rolling her eyes.

They talk for a while, mostly about her siblings and his Mum, whilst they pick at their food and sip at their hot drinks. He mentions leaving the army again, and she just listens and nods, because it almost feels as if he's trying to lead her into a decision she's not ready to make. He gets the hint, though, because he follows with a rubbish joke and it's not the joke itself that makes her laugh, but the way his eyes crinkle at the corners as he holds back his own chortles, how he's barely finished the punchline before he's creasing himself.

She's just starting to really relax, to actually enjoy herself, when he shifts in his seat, sobering, the faux leather squeaking softly beneath him. He leans forward a little, his stare piercing, and there's a small falter in Molly's heartrate. "I really like you, Mols."

She knows what he means, how he means it, and it's suddenly feels like she's been tricked into a blind date by her friends. As the smile fades from her lips, a cluster of protests gather and catch in her throat.

"I annoy you," she says, softly.

He gives her a wry smile. "You do, but that's half your charm."

Molly swallows, her fingers nervously twirling the ring on her finger, and the silver suddenly feels red hot, heavy. He's watching her, waiting for her to respond, but there's a fluttering in the pit of her stomach that she doesn't understand, can't decipher; it feels a little like panic, anxiety, maybe even a little excitement. It's not that she doesn't find Smurf attractive, (on the contrary, she thinks he's incredibly handsome), or funny (he makes her laugh more than anyone else she knows). There is something between them; a bond that she doesn't share with anyone else, nor has she ever before. She trusts him, with her life, and they've been through some tough shit together.

But he's just not him.

She pulls her gaze from his, focusing on the cardboard cup in her hand, pinching and unrolling the edge of the disposable beaker.

"I know you just want to be friends right now," he eventually says, breaking the silence that had settled between them. "I can wait." She closes her eyes, sighing quietly, because suddenly everything seems hard work again, like everything is closing in on her and pulling her apart. How did she even find herself here?

When she opens her eyes, a reply on the tip of her tongue ("You're my best mate, Smurf!") she's silenced by the surge of men pouring into the small coffee shop, laughing and joking, almost yelling in excitement, banging into tables and chairs as they noisily mock and tease each other, clearly high on the victory of their friendly rugby match; a popular past time for the Brits on downtime.

She blinks, pulls her focus from the rowdy crowd back to Smurf.

"You're not"

"Or not. 'Friends' is cool, too."

She breathes a sigh of relief then, and relaxes back in her chair, because despite his persistence to pursue her romantically, he's more like a brother than a friend.

"Nice ring."

She'd know his voice anywhere, so even though her eyes are tired from the crying, the brightness of the day, the dust that comes from living in the 'Stan, there's no mistaking him when she twists in her seat and follows Smurf's gaze up to meet Captain James'.

"It was my Mum's," Smurf says, almost smugly, and Captain James' smile fades slightly, his jaw muscles working hard to keep what remains in place. She slides her right hand from the table top, hiding the sparkling diamond in her lap, as if hiding it will make it disappear.

"I'm just looking after it," she says, and there's a tightness to her tone she hopes Smurf doesn't pick up on. If he has, it doesn't show.

She can't shake the feeling that she's just been caught doing something she shouldn't be, which is absurd, because she's done nothing wrong.

"If you think it's appropriate to be flaunting it around whilst in uniform, Dawes," James says, stiffly. "You're highly mistaken."

"No, Sir," she returns, sliding the ring from her hand and shoving it into her pocket. There's a small flare of anger at his suggestion of impropriety.

"But—" Smurf begins, protesting on her behalf, but Captain James turns his attention onto him, cutting him off.

"Private Smith, I can see the shit coating your gun from here. Unless you want to be on latrine duty for the remainder of your tour, I would hightail it out of here and give her a good clean."

"Yes, Sir," Smurf nods, and his cheeks pink slightly from his scolding. Guilt gnaws at Molly, because she knows he'd spent at least two hours stripping the machine last night, and their Captain's bad mood has nothing to do with anyone else but her. Smurf offers a small head jerk in her direction as way of saying goodbye, before hastily leaving the coffee shop, his boots scuffing slightly over the laminated flooring.

A charged silence fills the atmosphere between her and James, in the way that it always does when they're alone together, and when she finally gathers the courage to lift her gaze to meet his, his burnished pupils have her stomach doing a slow flip that makes her whole body ache in a way she's not sure she wants to feel anymore.

"Are you okay?" he asks her, quietly, and as he moves around to stand a little closer, his eyes flick over the now busy room, conscious of the other men and women within earshot.

She nods, trying to ignore the sparks that ignite between them. "Yeah, tough nut, me." It's a turn of phrase that falls from her too easily, a knee jerk reaction that's becoming second nature. He doesn't look very convinced though. His mouth slants slightly, pulling down at the corner, and it makes her think that perhaps he's hurting, too. "I'll be okay." She's not sure if she's reassuring him, or herself.

He smiles at her, then. A small, vulnerable smile that makes her almost forget the frustration and hurt, the lies and secrets.

Almost.

She closes her eyes and takes a breath, and when she reopens them, the smile has dissolved and it's easier for her to remember she's still angry with him.

"Do you need something, Sir?" Her voice only wavers a little, catching on the formality of her question, and he stalls in his reply, almost as if he's trying to think of a reason to keep her here with him, but his hesitancy is an answer in itself, so she pushes her chair back, chair legs grinding noisily over the flooring, and stands

up on weak knees. She stands firm, though.

"Dawes," he says, softy, almost as a plea, but there's no authority there, so she steps around the faux leather seat, hooks the strap of her (immaculate) rifle over her shoulder, and leaves.

OG

He catches up to her a little while later, as she's stepping out of the air conditioned hospital and into the wall of heat that still exists in the early evening. She's surprised to find him waiting for her, standing against one of the parked military ambulances, arms folded across his chest, one knee bent up so he can rest his foot against the large tyre. She won't admit it out loud, but the sight of him standing there like a camo-clad Adonis has her heart stuttering and step faltering.

He spots her almost immediately after she sees him, and then he's heading towards her, approaching like a hunting lion; all hard eyes and wound muscles, determined, and she tries her best to ignore him as she walks past him.

"Dawes." He turns and matches her stride as she hurries past him, and it takes all of her effort not to give in and glance at him. "Dawes." She feels his long, calloused fingers wrap around her small wrist, and she snatches out of his grasp as she shoots him as cold a glare as she can muster. "_Private Dawes_."

In frustration, he pulls rank, and this time, when he reaches for her arm, his grip is firm, and the momentum of her walk slams against his iron strength. Her body whips around to face him and she almost slams into him. She keeps her eyes trained on the small freckle barely visible above his collar, because she can't allow herself to give in, to bring her gaze to meet his.

"Sir," she forces out, because if nothing else, she can be professional, even as the anvil presses a little harder on her chest. A few seconds pass in silence, and she's beginning to feel the anger seep away. He exhales, hard, his breath fanning the top of her head, ruffling hair, and she's a second away from giving in and letting their eyes meet, but there's a strong pull on her arm, and he's tugging her back toward the parked ambulance he'd been resting against a few moments ago.

They stop at the rear of the vehicle, and in the seclusion of the hospital shadow, everything seems to just stop. The air is cooler here, and Molly's skin prickles with goose-pimples, and she's not entirely sure it's anything to do with the drop in temperature. She shrinks back, resting against the cool metal of the rig, and she watches as he paces before her, like a caged tiger, hand reaching up to run through his short hair. His eyes seek hers, and his feet halt when she finally allows their gaze to lock.

"What do you want?" he finally asks, and his voice is low, gravelled, demanding.

"What do you?" she snaps, because she's not the one that's been hiding an entire life. His jaw is tight as he looks down at her, and though she can feel the frustration rolling off of him in waves, she can just tell it's not directed at her.

His eyes search hers, her face, gaze falling to her mouth, and she swallows, hard. He closes the space between them with two, large strides, and his hands move up to rest either side of her, palm against metal, caging her in. He stands still, close enough for her to smell the last subtle notes of the aftershave he'd put on early this morning, and even in the muted light of the shadows, she can see his pupils smouldering as they stay trained on her. She feels warm, too warm, as heat travels from somewhere deep inside, inching its way up her chest, her neck, flooding her cheeks.

He leans forward.

She holds her breath, gaze dropping to his mouth. His breaths are hard and deep, and he moves slowly, purposefully, tilting his head as he brings his lips close to hers. One of his hands drops onto her shoulder, moves up her neck, settles at her nape " skin against skin.

The air between them is hot and static, and the hairs on her body stand on end.

His eyes close, and her body automatically arches into him, and she craves his mouth on hers. They've been fighting the attraction for too damn long.

"I want things to be different," he says, a whispered confession, his breath flowing over her lips and into her mouth. He doesn't say any more than that, but he doesn't have to. She closes her eyes, briefly, and she wonders why everything seems to ache, why they always seem to pull towards each other as if magnetised.

She hears him swallow thickly, and when she opens her eyes, he's still standing there, so close. The space between them is charged, electrified, and her stomach is doing that slow flip thing again, and she realises he's waiting for her to answer him. She draws in a shallow, shaky breath, before whispering,

"But they ain't."

His fingers tremble against her, and his eyes slide closed again, breath leaving his mouth in a long, slow exhale. It's a subtle difference, but she notices the way his shoulders fall a little, accepting. He nods, once.

"No, they aren't."

This time, when his lids peel back, there's something in his burnished pupils that she hasn't seen before, and can't quite interpret; a mix of determination and pain, of self-preservation and guilt. Regret.

In a too swift movement, his hand is withdrawing from her nape, and he's taking a step back. Despite the relatively high temperatures, the newfound space between their bodies seems to be cold, gaping, too bloody big. His stormy pupils hold hers for a few painstaking seconds.

And then he walks away.

* * *

><p>End

**AN; this was always meant to be a canon
one-shot-episode-filler-missing-scenes piece. So dont worry, we all
know how it goes down between M+J in that bunker ;) **

End
file.